

## CLAIMS

1. A method (30) for controlling a television signal receiver (20) having an emergency alert function, comprising:
  - receiving an input representing a geographical area (31; 41); and
  - providing a masked list of emergency events responsive to the input,wherein the masked list of emergency events represents a subset of all emergency events associated with the emergency alert function (31; 42).
2. The method (30) of claim 1, wherein the geographical area is represented by a FIPS location code.
3. The method (30) of claim 1, further comprised of enabling a user to select an emergency event from the masked list of emergency events (31; 43).
4. The method (30) of claim 3, further comprised of:
  - receiving emergency alert signals indicating an occurrence of the selected emergency event (32); and
  - providing an alert output responsive to the emergency alert signals (34).
5. The method (30) of claim 1, further comprised of:
  - receiving emergency alert signals indicating an occurrence of an emergency event not included in the masked list of emergency events (32); and
  - providing an alert output responsive to the emergency alert signals (34).
6. The method (30) of claim 1, wherein:
  - the received input represents a plurality of geographical areas;
  - each of the geographical areas includes at least one masked event; and
  - the masked list of emergency events excludes the masked events common to all of the geographical areas.

7. The method (30) of claim 6, wherein the plurality of geographical areas are represented by a corresponding plurality of FIPS location codes.

8. A television signal receiver (20) having an emergency alert function, comprising:

a memory (27) operative to store data associated with the emergency alert function; and

a processor (27) operative to receive an input representing a geographical area and enable generation of a masked list of emergency events responsive to the input using the data in the memory (27), wherein the masked list of emergency events represents a subset of all emergency events associated with the emergency alert function.

9. The television signal receiver (20) of claim 8, wherein the geographical area is represented by a FIPS location code.

10. The television signal receiver (20) of claim 8, wherein a user selects an emergency event from the masked list of emergency events.

11. The television signal receiver (20) of claim 10, further comprising:  
a tuner (22) operative to tune a frequency including emergency alert signals indicating an occurrence of the selected emergency event (32); and  
wherein the processor (27) enables an alert output responsive to the emergency alert signals.

12. The television signal receiver (20) of claim 8, further comprising:  
a tuner (22) operative to tune a frequency including emergency alert signals indicating an occurrence of an emergency event not included in the masked list of emergency events; and  
wherein the processor (27) enables an alert output responsive to the emergency alert signals.

13. The television signal receiver (20) of claim 8, wherein:  
the input received by the processor (27) represents a plurality of geographical areas and each of the geographical areas includes at least one masked event; and  
the masked list of emergency events excludes the masked events common to all of the geographical areas.

14. The television signal receiver (20) of claim 13, wherein the plurality of geographical areas are represented by a corresponding plurality of FIPS location codes.

15. A television signal receiver (20) having an emergency alert function, comprising:  
memory means (27) for storing data associated with the emergency alert function; and  
processing means (27) for receiving an input representing a geographical area and enabling generation of a masked list of emergency events responsive to the input using the data in the memory means (27), wherein the masked list of emergency events represents a subset of all emergency events associated with the emergency alert function.

16. The television signal receiver (20) of claim 15, wherein the geographical area is represented by a FIPS location code.

17. The television signal receiver (20) of claim 15, wherein a user selects an emergency event from the masked list of emergency events.

18. The television signal receiver (20) of claim 17, further comprising:  
tuning means (22) for tuning a frequency including emergency alert signals indicating an occurrence of the selected emergency event (32); and  
wherein the processing means (27) enables an alert output responsive to the emergency alert signals.

19. The television signal receiver (20) of claim 15, further comprising:  
tuning means (22) for tuning a frequency including emergency alert signals indicating an occurrence of an emergency event not included in the masked list of emergency events; and  
wherein the processing means (27) enables an alert output responsive to the emergency alert signals.
20. The television signal receiver (20) of claim 15, wherein:  
the input received by the processing means (27) represents a plurality of geographical areas and each of the geographical areas includes at least one masked event; and  
the masked list of emergency events excludes the masked events common to all of the geographical areas.
21. The television signal receiver (20) of claim 20, wherein the plurality of geographical areas are represented by a corresponding plurality of FIPS location codes.